

AFTER ADMISSION TO A NURSING HOME



When you enter a nursing home, your rights as a resident and as a citizen of the United States are protected under federal and state law. The nursing home must observe residents' right to dignity and respect in the care they provide and in each resident's daily life. Residents are entitled to make decisions about their well-being.

Upon admission, the nursing home must give you a complete copy of the rights of residents and explain them fully. Nursing home staff must also encourage each resident to exercise these rights. The following is a partial list of resident rights. You, as a nursing home resident, have the right to:

- Be treated with respect and dignity;
- Be fully informed of your rights, services available, and all related charges prior to, or upon admission;
- Make choices about aspects of your life in the nursing home that are significant to you;
- Be free from chemical and physical restraints that are not required to treat a medical symptom;
- Voice complaints without fear of reprisal; and
- Vote and exercise your other rights as a citizen of the United States.

The pamphlet, ***Know Your Rights as a Resident in a Nursing Home***, which is available from the Bureau of Quality Assurance's Central Office (address and phone number at the end of this pamphlet), provides more information on this subject.

IF A PROBLEM OCCURS

If the nursing home does not provide appropriate care, if you have concerns about the home's operations, or if you feel a resident right is being violated, talk with the nursing home's administrator or social worker. Follow the nursing home's complaint procedure and talk with the resident council or family council. If you are not satisfied, or are uncomfortable discussing your concerns with nursing home

staff, you can contact the Wisconsin Ombudsman Program. The Ombudsman Program is an organization established by the state legislature to investigate complaints and resolve problems or disputes relating to long term care (phone numbers at the end of this pamphlet).

If you feel uncomfortable voicing your concerns elsewhere, or if you do not receive an acceptable answer through your efforts, you can file a complaint with the Division of Supportive Living, Bureau of Quality Assurance's Regional Offices (addresses and phone numbers at the end of this pamphlet). Anyone may file a complaint. The complaint can be in writing, by telephone or in person. If the complainant does not want his or her identity shared with the nursing home, he/she can request anonymity. Complaints should contain as much detail as possible about the problem, including dates and the names of residents, staff or other persons who were involved or who may have more information.

The Division of Supportive Living investigates complaints within its jurisdiction to determine if a state or federal regulation has been violated. Results are sent to the person who filed the complaint, if a name and address are given.